

ACTION RESEARCH FINAL REPORT-2014

Kenji Hasegawa

March 2015

Title: Communicative Language Teaching in Senior High School

Teaching Context:

- (1) Level: 1st year of senior high school
- (2) Class size: 33x3 classes
- (3) Time: 50 min.x3/week
- (4) Textbook: ELEMENT English Communication1(KEIRINKAN)

Problems:

- (1) I didn't know how to teach English in communicative approach.
- (2) I used a lot of Japanese for instruction.
- (3) My classes were teacher-centered.
- (4) There were few opportunities for interaction in my classes.

According to course of study for senior high schools, classes should in principle be conducted in English to develop students' communicative competence. However, I used a lot of Japanese in classes, so the opportunities were very limited for students to be exposed to English.

Besides, according to Long (1983, 1996), interaction is indispensable to acquire languages, but, my classes were teacher-centered. Therefore there were few opportunities for students to interact in English.

Above all, my classes were not enough to develop students' communicative competence through English.

Goals:

- (1) Students can enjoy classes and be motivated to communicate with their classmates.
- (2) Students can develop their communicative competence.
- (3) Students can express their opinions in English.

What I did:

- (1) Original handouts for CLT

I made original handouts based on the instructional framework presented by James F. Lee & Bill VanPatten (2003, p. 228). There are three phases in the lesson, pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. To facilitate students' comprehension process, the three phases are essential.

The initial phase is pre-reading (preparation). This phase is put before reading. In this phase, teachers try to activate students' schema. I often use previewing titles, illustrations and photographs,

and T or F questions to help students guess the content of the textbook.

The next phase is while-reading (guided interaction). In this phase, there are lots of task-based pair activities. To complete the tasks, students read the textbook many times. So, students can interact with the content many times.

The last phase is post-reading (assimilation and personalizing). In this phase, students retell the story, which helps students understand the content more deeply. At the end of the lesson, students personalize a topic related to the lesson through timed-conversation activities.

(2) Instructions in English

The handout made it easier to give instructions in English because what I had to say for the instructions was clear. I didn't translate English in the textbook into Japanese. I paraphrased difficult expressions in simple English as much as possible.

(3) Conversation Strategies

Students learned how to use conversation strategies step by step in another subject, English Expression1. I also emphasized the importance of conversation strategies and gave opportunities to practice them through interaction.

(4) Fun Essay

Students wrote Fun Essays at the end of each lesson. I gave them opportunities for peer review after writing drafts. Through peer review, students tried hard to search for good aspects and give positive comments to help each other. Their essays were evaluated by three aspects: design, length, content. I was surprised to see most of them were wonderful. At the end of the year, all of the students wrote over 120 words. The average was about 200 words, 400 words at most.

(5) Speaking Test

I conducted a speaking test at the end of the year. Students talked about their dreams in pairs for four minutes in the test. Their performances were evaluated by three aspects: conversation strategies, fluency, attitude (volume & eye contact). Before the speaking test, they had already written about their dreams in the Fun Essay and practiced talking about the topic many times in timed-conversation activities. Therefore, they had enough opportunities to prepare for the speaking test.

(6) Students' Survey

I created a questionnaire to know what students thought about my class and how students developed their language skills. Students answered the questionnaire at the end of the year. From the result of the survey, I have learned many things.

Survey Results [n=97(2 discounted)]:

a) Classes

Chart 1:

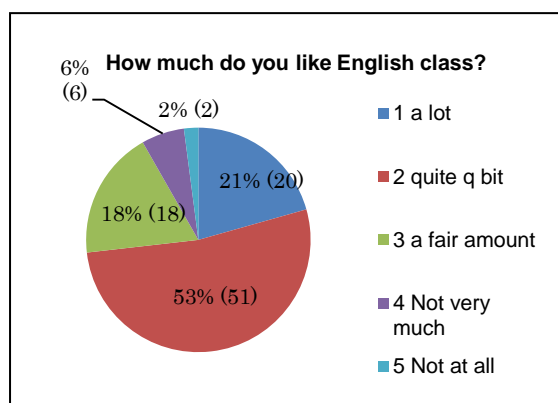


Chart 2:

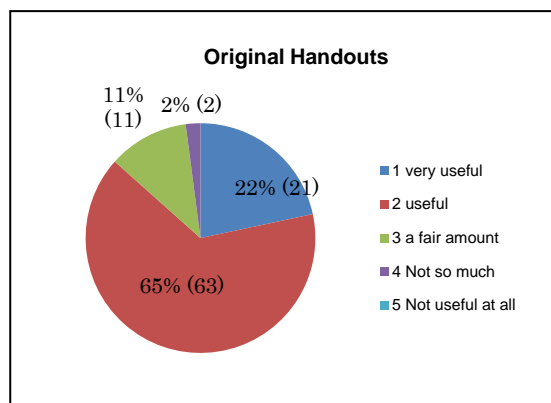


Chart 3[multiple answers]:

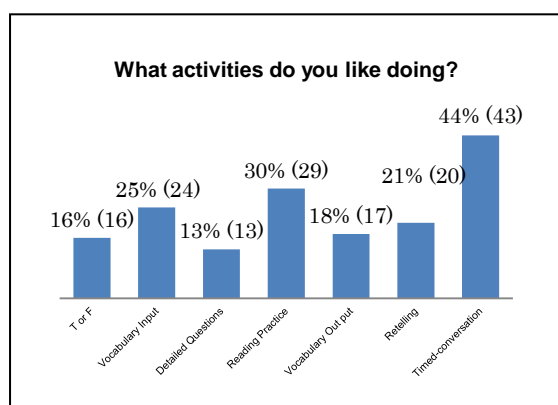


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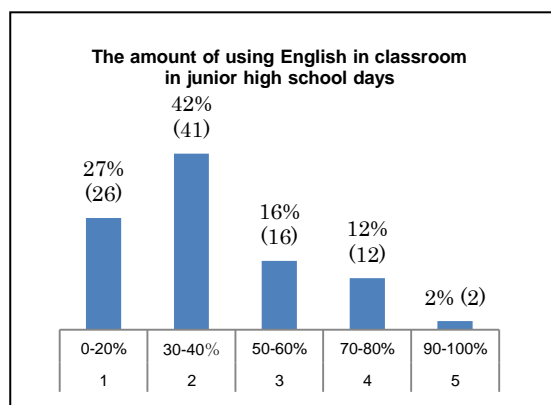


Chart 5:

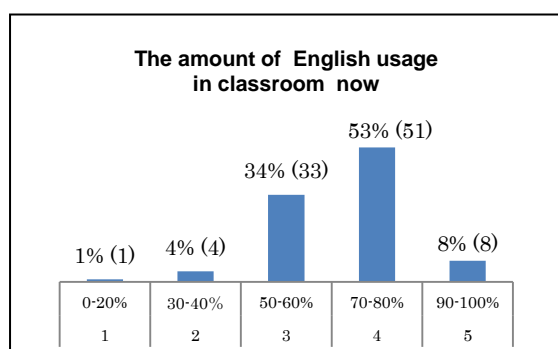


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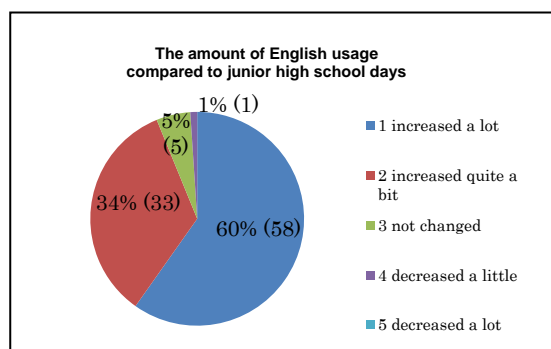


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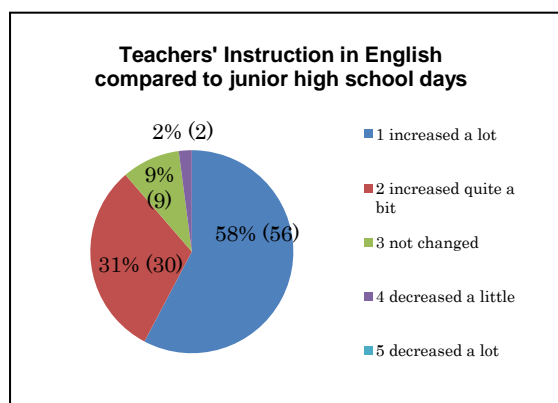


Chart 8[multiple answers]:

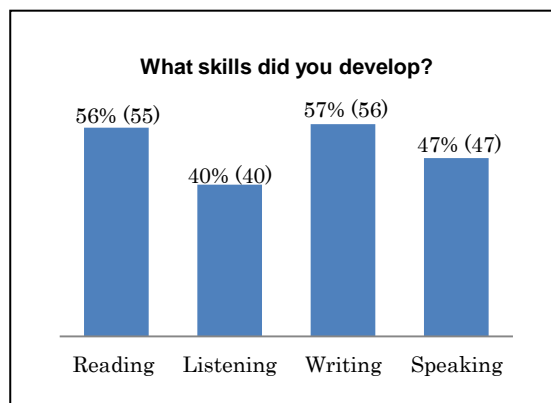
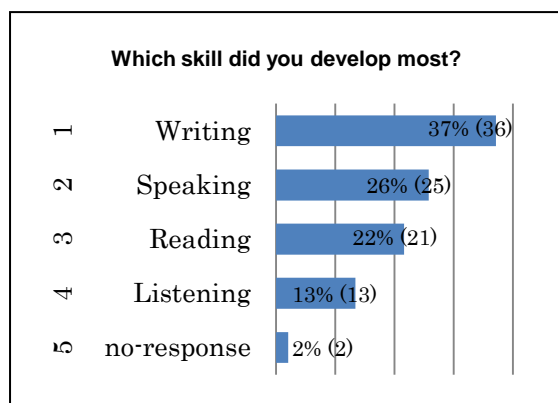


Chart 9:



b) Interaction Activities

Chart 10

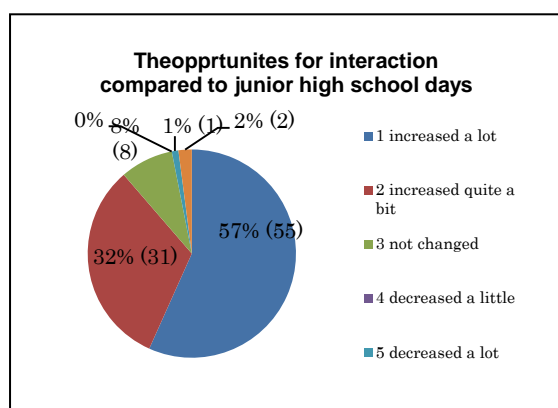


Chart 11

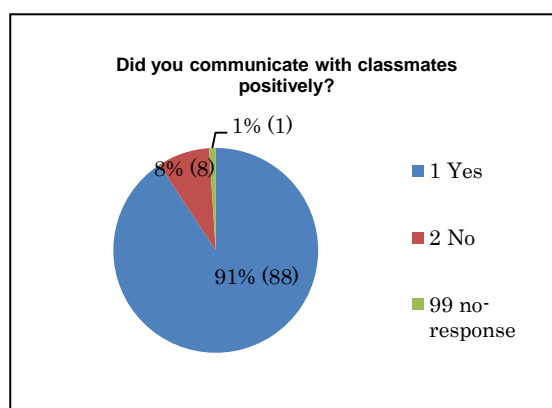


Chart 12

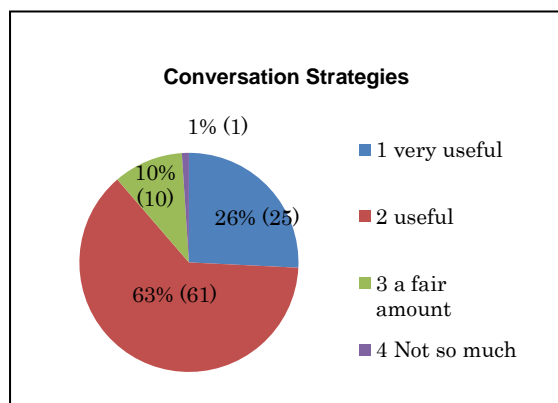


Chart 13

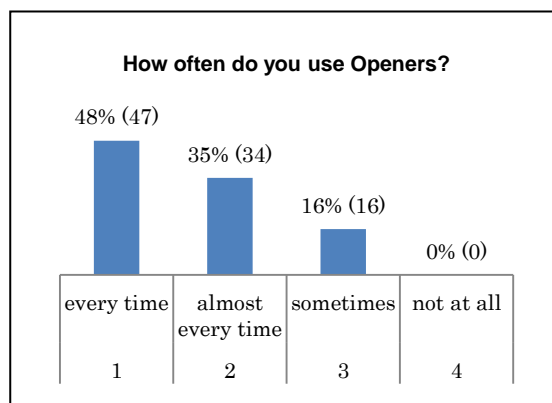


Chart 14

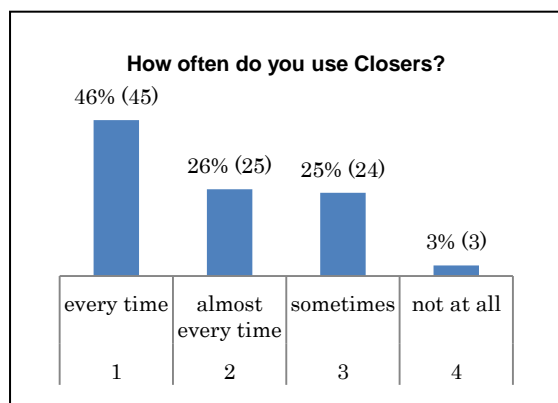


Chart 15

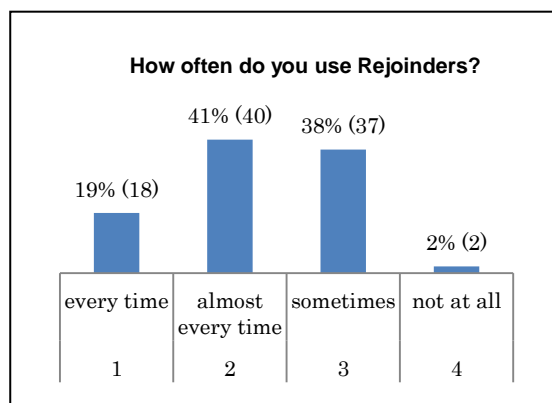


Chart 16

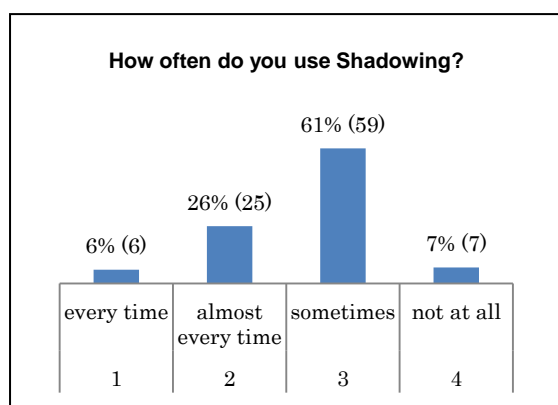


Chart 17

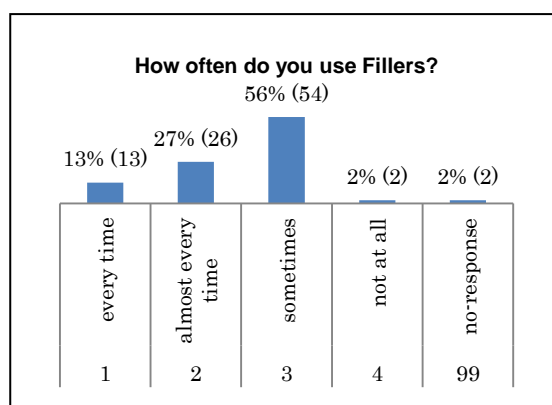
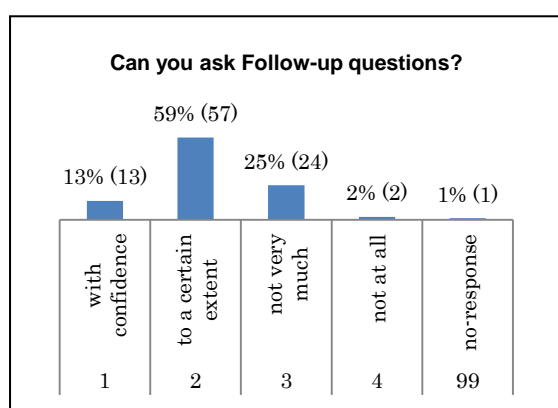


Chart 18



c) Fun Essays

Chart 19

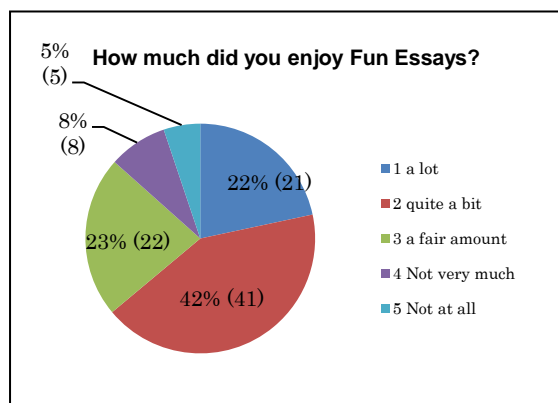


Chart 20

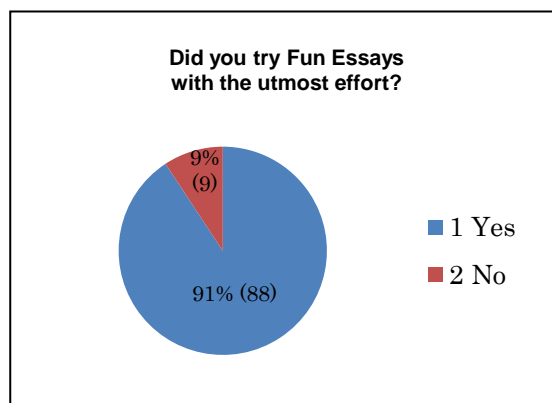


Chart 21

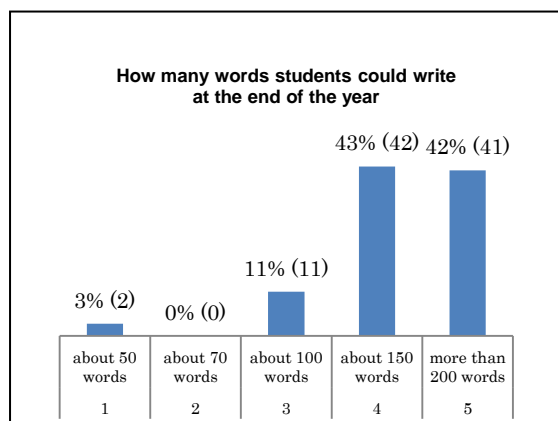
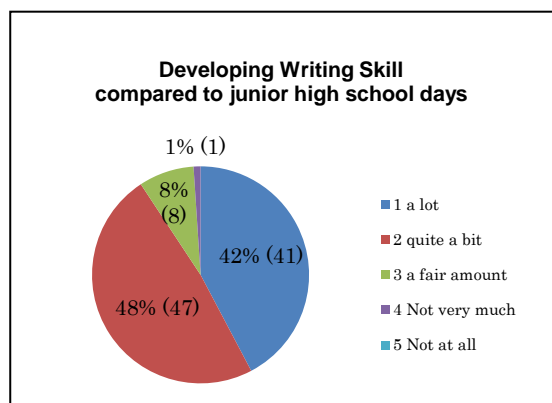


Chart 22



d) Speaking Test

Chart 23

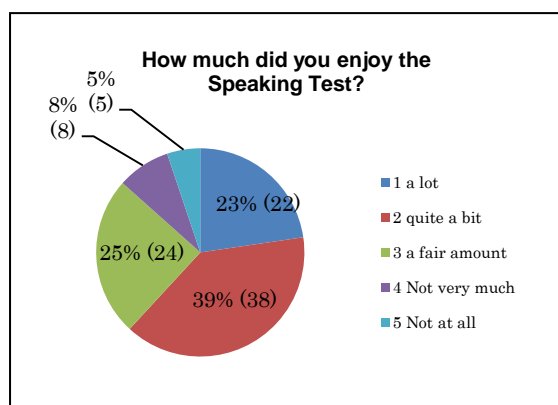


Chart 24

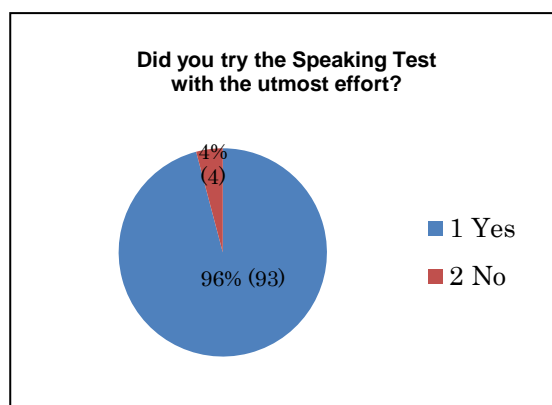


Chart 25

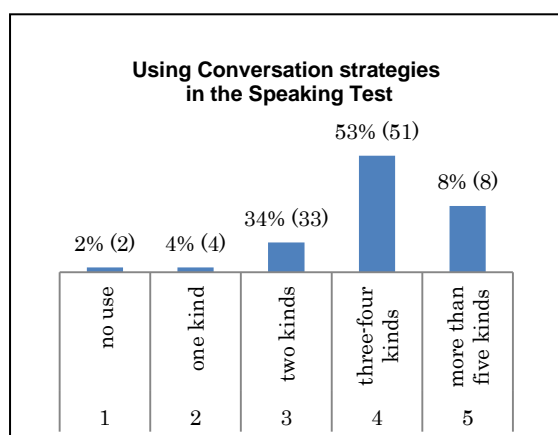
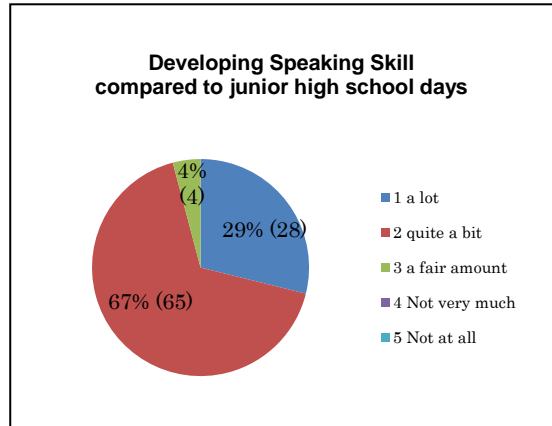
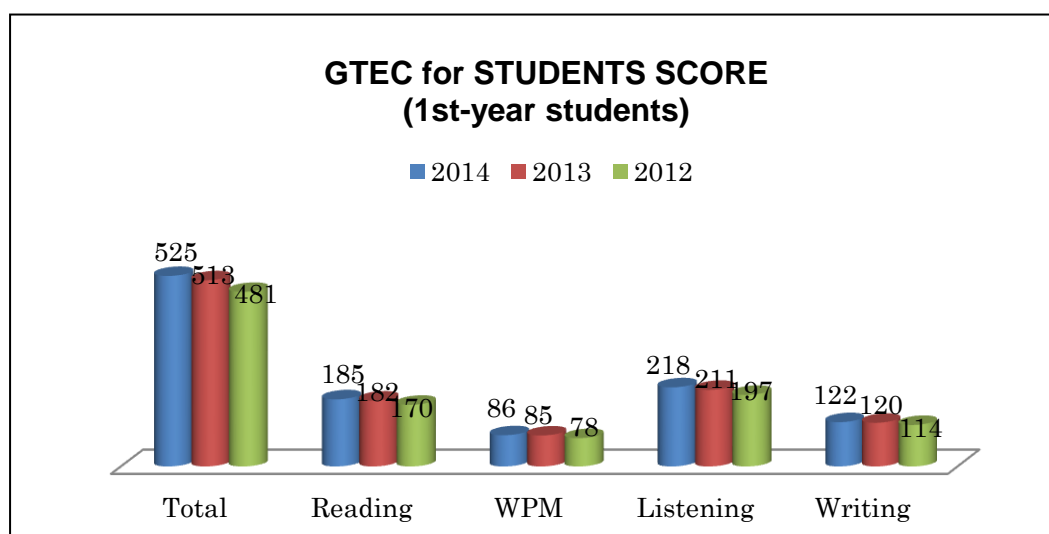


Chart 26



GTEC for STUDENTS Results Comparison:



What I learned:

(1) Classes

At the end of the year, more than 70% of the students answered they liked English classes. Not only students but also teachers enjoyed the classes. The instructional framework helped me make well-organized lesson plans. More than 85% of the students thought the handouts were useful. The handouts facilitated students' comprehension process. Students came to be used to working on the activities in the handouts and follow instructions smoothly. The most popular activity was 'Timed-Conversation.' Many students enjoyed talking in pairs and expressing their opinions. The second most popular activity was 'Reading Practice.' Many students commented that reading the textbook many times was helpful to interact with the contents.

I was able to give students many opportunities to be exposed to English. About 90% of the students answered that the amount of teachers' using English for instruction increased compared to that in junior high school days. About 95% of the students answered that the amount of their English usage in the classes increased, 60% of them thought it increased a lot. While most students used English from 30% to 40% in classes when they were junior high school students, now they use it from 70% to 80%. From the results, I think that I could change my classes from teacher-centered into students-centered.

In addition, I was able to give students lots of opportunities for interaction. There were lots of task-based activities. As a result, about 90% of the students answered that the opportunities for interaction increased compared to those in junior high school days, and for about 60% of them, they increased a lot. Most of them worked on the interaction activities positively.

(2) Performance Tests

About 65% of the students enjoyed writing Fun Essays. I was afraid that many students couldn't be bothered to write. But, I was very glad to see how wonderful their essays were. I think evaluating essays by different aspects is important to motivate students. Some students who didn't have confidence made well-designed essays, which let me know how motivated they were. The first essay topic was 'having pets for children.' Because of the topic, the contents students wrote in their essays tended to be almost the same. On the other hand, second essay topic was 'dreams.' Their essays were diverse. So I really enjoyed reading them. I realized the importance of choosing relevant topics. Over 90% of the students answered that they developed their writing skills. Indeed, 43% of the students came to be able to write about 150 words and 42% of the students could write over 200 words at the end of the year. To my surprise, many students answered the most improved skill was writing.

About 60% of the students enjoyed the speaking test. Through the test, more than 90% of the students realized that they developed their speaking skills. Most students used three or four kinds of conversation strategies in the test. Moreover, 8% of the students used more than 5 kinds of conversation strategies. Now, about 90% of the students realize that conversation strategies are

useful to keep conversations going. However, some kinds of conversation strategies seem to be difficult to use. While most students use openers and closers '*every time*' when they talk in English, they '*sometimes*' use shadowing and fillers.

More than 90% of the students answered that they tried performance tests with the utmost effort. Some students commented that they hoped to take more performance tests. The results show that tests can be done in a way that will have a positive effect on motivating students, which is called '*WASHBACK EFFECTS*.'

(3) Developing skills

From the result of the questionnaire, I know that students have developed four well-balanced skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. To assess the outcome objectively, I analyzed the data from the GTEC for students. Our students take the test at the same time each year. Compared to the first-year students of last year and the year before that, those of this year accomplished better results in terms of all skills. The results show I could conduct my classes integrating four skills.

(4) Belief

Action Research has great impact on my beliefs. Before I started learning in NUFS last April, I had had the belief that explicit explanation was indispensable and drills were effective tools for learning languages. However, I was able to change my classes from teacher-centered to students-centered. Most of my students enjoy my classes and develop their language skills. Now I believe comprehensible input and interaction are necessary to acquire languages. My beliefs have been evolving.

Future Issues:

- My classes work to some extent. But, I use the same activities in the instructional framework. It can be boring for students. Some students commented they wanted to try more different activities, for example, debating, games, making original stories and so on.
- I was able to conduct my classes integrating four skills. However, the classes seemed to be in short of listening activities. In fact, some students commented they wanted to have more opportunities for listening.
- I would like to spread the teaching style across our school. Still, a few teachers seem to be doubtful about the approach and it might be difficult to change their beliefs. However, Some teachers hope to work cooperatively
- On present showing, performance tests account for only a small percentage of the assessment. So the results of performance tests have little influence on them. Students didn't know my detailed evaluation criteria because teachers are not permitted to announce it. But, I am afraid that students might lose their motivation if they notice the fact that performance tests have little effect on their grades.

Lesson Plan (Day 1)

Kenji Hasegawa

1. Level: Senior high school first year students
2. Class size: 3 classes with 33 students
3. Text book: ELEMENT English Communication1(KEIRINKAN)
Lesson4 'Twice Bombed, Twice Survived'
4. Goal: Students can express their dreams.
5. Objectives:
 - (1) Students can have a chance to think about their dreams.
 - (2) Students can understand the experience of Yamaguchi Tsutomu.
 - (3) Students can express their dreams after finishing Part4
6. Procedure
 - (1) Day one: Pre-reading, Skimming the whole text (Part1-4), Part1(Today's lesson)
 - (2) Day two: Part1
 - (3) Day three: Part2
 - (4) Day four: Part2, Part3
 - (5) Day five: Part3, Part4
 - (6) Day six: Part4
 - (7) Day seven: Comprehension
 - (8) Day eight: Essay writing1
 - (9) Day nine: Essay writing2
 - (10) Day ten: Speaking test
7. Today's lesson Plan
 - I. Pre-reading of this lesson
 - (1) Introduction
 - (2) Announcement of the goal in this lesson
 - (3) Preview the whole story
 - II. Pre-reading
 - (1) True or False question1 :
 - Guessing and answering the T or F question in the handout before reading Part1.
 - III. While-reading
 - (2) True or False question2:
 - Reading Part1 silently and answering the T or F question in the handout.
 - After that, checking the answer in pairs

(3) Vocabulary Input:

- Matching the underlined English words and Japanese ones
- Giving the meanings in Japanese, pronouncing the new words and practice (translating Japanese into English in pairs)

(4) Quick Reading1:

- Reading Part1 silently and timing the speed.

(5) Detailed question:

- Reading Part1 silently and answering the detailed questions about the story in English.
- After that, checking the answer in pairs

That's all for today's lesson.

(6) Reading Practice (If we have enough time to do)

- 1st time-Teacher & Students
- 2nd time-Reading in a soft voice by themselves
- 3rd time-Students & Students (Shadowing: one of them doesn't see the textbook in turn)

(7) Quick Reading2:

- Reading Part1 silently and timing the speed.

IV. Post-reading

(8) Vocabulary Output

- Reading the definitions of the new words and filling in the blanks with listed below.

(9) Retelling

- Retelling the story of Part1with several sentences in pairs

(10) Timed-Conversation

- Writing their opinions about the lesson and talking in pairs.

8. Assessment

(1) Essay: Writing about their dreams.

(2) Speech: Speaking about their dreams.

(3) Comment: Teacher's comment about the student's activities.

Lesson 4

“Twice Bombed, Twice survived”

Pre-reading of this lesson

Goal

You will be able to write and speak about your dream.

Preview the story 1 : Skimming

Open your textbook. Look at the pictures on page 38 and 39. Then, read only the first sentence in each paragraph from 40 to 41 and answer the following true or false questions.

1. In 2009, the people of Prague and people around the world listened to Barack Obama, the 44th president of the US. T / F
2. Barack Obama also received a nuclear arm from Japan. T / F
3. Some people said he (Yamaguchi) was the kindest man ever. T / F
4. He spoke in schools and wrote books about his experience, and he was also in a movie about survivors. T / F

Preview the story 2

Answer the following questions.

Q1 When was the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima ?

Q2 Have you ever visited the Genbaku Dome?

Q3 Have you ever heard about war experiences?

Q4 Have you thought about keeping world peace?



Pre-reading of Part 1

Part one

True or False question

First of all, guess true or false before reading part one. Circle T or F.

1. President Obama made a speech for peace at the United Nations. T / F
2. Obama said that it's impossible to make a world without nuclear weapons. T / F
3. His achievement of world without nuclear weapons won him the prize in 2009. T / F

While-reading of Part 1

Now open your textbook on page 40 and read part one silently. After that, check your answers. You may want to change them.

Check your answer with your friend as follows:

A: Let's talk about No.1. Is this true or false?

B: I think it is true/false. How about you?

A: I think so, too. / I don't think so. I think it is true/false.

B: Then how about No.2? Is this true or false?

A: I think it is...

Vocabulary Input

Match the underlined English words and Japanese ones.

1. He ignored all the 'No smoking' sign and lit up a cigarette.
()
2. I am losing my patience with you.
()
3. Nine countries together possess more than 16,000 nuclear weapons.
() ()
4. Great persistence is necessary for success.
()
5. He stated that the negotiations would continue.
()

ア ～と述べる、明言する
オ ～を無視する

イ 兵器
エ ～粘り強さ

ウ 忍耐、辛抱強さ

エ 核 (の)

Play Janken-pon. Winners say Japanese and losers translate into English. When you have finished, change the role. I would like you to memorize all words or phrases.

Quick Reading 1

Read part one silently and time your speed by yourself. (seconds)

**Detailed question**

Now answer the following questions in English. You may want to scan the text.

1. What was America's promise in Obama's speech?

→

2. What did President Obama receive in 2009?

→

3. Did Obama think that it was easy to achieve his promise?

→

Check your answer with your friend like the following.

A: Let's talk about question No.1. What was America's promise in Obama's speech?

B: I think ... How about you?

A: I think so, too. / I don't think so. I think...

B: Okay, let's talk about question No.2. What did President Obama receive in 2009?

**Reading practice**

Let's practice reading! 1st time- read the story with your teacher, check your pronunciation of the words you find difficult. 2nd time-read it again in a soft voice by yourself, 3rd time-shadowing; play Janken-pon, losers shadow your partner without the textbook. Please change the role in each paragraph.

Quick Reading 2

Read part one silently and time your speed by yourself. (seconds)

Post-reading of Part 1**Vocabulary Output**

Fill in the blanks with the words listed below.

1. _____ = to hit your hands against each other many times to make a sound that shows your approval, agreement, or enjoyment
2. _____ = the ability to continue waiting or doing something for a long time without becoming angry or anxious
3. _____ = a statement that you will definitely do or provide something or that something will definitely happen
4. _____ = to deliberately pay no attention to something that you have been told or that you know about
5. _____ = something that you use to fight with or attack someone with, such as a knife, bomb, or gun

Word list⇒ weapon / clap / patience / ignore / promise

Retelling

I want you to retell part one with several sentences. You may use key words below if necessary. Play Janken-pon, winners first tell one sentence about the first information of part one. Then, losers will continue to tell the story with one sentence. Take turns retelling the story.

key words for part 1 : Barack Obama, a world without nuclear weapons, patience and persistence, ignore the voices, with excitement, the Nobel Peace Prize

Timed-Conversation

“Your dream?” is your fun essay topic. This activity is useful for you to complete your fun essay. First answer two questions ① and ② below. Then, start timed-conversation with your partner next to you. Play Janken-pon, losers start talking. You have TWO minutes.

The list of conversation strategies

opener / How about you? / shadowing / rejoinders / follow up questions / closer

Could you say that again, please? ←Use this, if you don't understand what your partner says.

①What is your dream?

⇒

②Why?

⇒



Class () No.() Name ()

‘My Dream’ Speaking Test Criteria 【評価表】

I .Check list

Conversation Strategies	Counts (used)
Openers & Closers	
How about you?	
Rejoinders	
Fillers	
Shadowing	
Follow-up questions	

II .Evaluation Criteria

項目			
Conversation Strategies	3 種類使うことができた。 (3)	4 種類使うことができた。 (7)	5 種類以上使うことができた。 (10)
Fluency	4 分間の会話を続けることができなかった。 (3)	ときどき沈黙はあるものの、4 分間の会話を続けることができた。(6)	スムーズに 4 分間の会話を続けることができた。 (10)
Attitude (Volume & Eye contact)	声も小さく、アイコンタクトもできていなかった。 (3)	ある程度、声量とアイコンタクトに気を付けていた。 (6)	声も大きく、アイコンタクトも十分できていた。 (10)

III.Comments:

Your Score

/30

My Dream

How You Are Evaluated in Fun Essay



<Writing Assignment>

Your 'Fun Essay' is evaluated by three aspects:

①Design ②Length ③Content

The essay is worth a total of 20 points.



Design	
A (5points)	You use pictures or illustrations, and color effectively.
B (3points)	You use pictures or illustrations, and color.
C (1point)	You use only black.
Length	
A (5points)	You write over 120 words.
B (4points)	You write 110 to 119 words.
C (3point)	You write 100 to 109 words.
Content	
A (7points)	Your essay is very interesting and creative.
B (5points)	Your essay is interesting, but not so creative.
C (3point)	Your essay is too simple and monotonous.
Bonus point 1(at most, three bonus points)	
	You will get a bonus point if your essay is brilliant in one of the aspects above. You can get at most three bonus points.